

REMARKS**I. Status of the Claims:**

Claims 1-31 are currently pending. Of these, claims 1-12, 25, 27, 28 and 31 are allowed. Claims 15 and 20-24 are objected to as being dependent upon rejected claim(s) but would be allowable if placed in independent form.

By this Amendment, claims 13 and 20 have been amended, and claim 15, 26, 29 and 30 has been canceled without prejudice. Specifically, claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 15, and allowable claim 20 has been placed in independent form. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter. Thus, entry and consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-14, 16-25, 27, 28 and 31 would be pending.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 13, 14, 16-19, 26, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hata (U.S. Patent No. 6,700,614).

Independent claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 15, and claims 26, 29 and 30 have been canceled without prejudice. As such, the application is believed to be in allowable form. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION


Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4640. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4640. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

Respectfully submitted,
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